

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A) VE

SUBJ: CANCELLATION OF SECRETARY'S VISIT

REF: STATE 92197; CARACAS 4274

1. CANCELLATION OF SECRETARY'S VISIT TO CARACAS WAS FRONT-PAGE NEWS APR 22 IN ALL CARACAS DAILIES. FOREIGN MINISTER ESCOVAR'S REACTION THE AFTERNOON OF APR 22, REPORTED IN CARACAS 4274, WAS FEATURED IN THE CARACAS PRESS APR 23. DAILY JOURNAL ACCOUNT ALSO REPORTED THAT ESCOVAR HAD COMMENTED THAT THE SECRETARY CANCELLED HIS VISIT " BECAUSE OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES PREVAILING AT THIS MOMENT IN SOUTHEAST ASIA."

2. PRESS APR 23 REPORTS COMMENT BY AD SENATOR PEDRO PARIS MONTESINOS THAT IT IS POSSIBLE THE SECRETARY MIGHT HAVE FACED DEMONSTRATIONS FROM THE FAR LEFT DUE TO THE EVENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA BUT THAT "I REGRET SUSPENSION OF THIS VISIT BECAUSE VENEZUELA REALLY IS INTERESTED IN MAINTAINING A FRANK AND SINCERE DIALOGUE WITH THE US BY MEANS OF ITS SECRETARY OF STATE." COPEI'S VALMORE ACEVEDO, ON THE OTHER HAND, DISCOUNTED THE VISIT'S IMPORTANCE, BEING QUOTED AS STATING THAT US-VENEZUELAN PROBLEMS " HAVE NOT REACHED SUCH A CRITICAL POINT THAT THE PRESENCE OF KISSINGER IS IMPERATIVE... MANY MEANS OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE US REMAIN." MAS LEADER ARGELIA LAYA WAS QUOTED AS SAYING "IT IS A GOOD THING HE DIDN'T COME, SINCE WITH THE TRIUMPH OF VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA THE FAILURE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S POLICY IS BEING UNDERSCORED." COMMUNIST

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PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL JESUS FARIA CASTIGATED US POLICY IN

SOUTHEAST ASIA AND TERMED THE SUSPENSION OF THE VISIT "OPPORTUNE."

3. APR 23 EL UNIVERSAL CARRIES CABLE PAGE STORIES ON THE CANCELLATION OF THE TRIP. ALSO APPEARING IN EL UNIVERSAL APR 23 IS A COLUMN BY REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR JOSE ANTONIO RIAL ENTITLED "THE DEFEAT OF THE LONE RANGER" BITTERLY CRITICIZING THE SECRETARY FOR NEGLECTING AND DISDAINING LATIN AMERICA. COLUMN ENDS WITH: " KISSINGER, IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED, HAS A RACIST ATTITUDE WITH RESPECT TO LATIN AMERICA. THERE IS NO POINT IN HIDING IT. FOR HIM WE ARE ALWAYS THE LAST TO BE HEARD AND CONSIDERED."

4. APR 23 EL NACIONAL BURIES STORY IN ITS MIRAFLORES A LA VISTA COLUMN, REPORTING THE REACTION OF FOREIGN MINISTER ESCOVAR (PARA 1 ABOVE). EL NACIONAL ALSO FEATURES A ZAPATAZOS CARTOON SHOWING A TOP-HATTED DIPLOMAT SAYING THROUGH A DOORWAY (PRESUMABLY TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER) " MR KISSINGER HAS ASKED WHY SHOULD HE COME IF THEY ARE GOING TO REMOVE HIM FROM OFFICE(CORTAR EL CAMBUR)?"

5. LOCAL DIPLOMATIC CORPS HAS TENDED TO BE UNDERSTANDING OF AND SYMPATHETIC TO CANCELLATION OF VISIT. HOWEVER, MORE JUNIOR DIPLOMATS HERE ARE OUTSPOKENLY CRITICAL OF THE CANCELLATION.

6. COMMENT. REACTION SO FAR MAY BE SUMMED UP AS PUBLIC REGRET ON THE PART OF THE GOV AND AD PARTY, INDIFFERENCE ON THE PART OF COPEI AND HOSTILITY ON THE PART OF THE FAR LEFT. HOWEVER, PRIVATELY ALL VENEZUELANES ARE DISAPPOINTED THAT THE VISIT WILL NOT MATERIALIZE, AND THEIR FURTHER REACTIONS TEND TO REFLECT THEIR BASIC ATTITUDES TOWARD THE US.

7. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE REACTIONS TO THE VISIT'S CANCELLATION.
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